

# ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BOSS PROMOTES APPRENTICESHIPS

The drive by Britain's leading political parties during the general election campaign to encourage thousands more young people looking for worthwhile careers to gain vital qualifications through apprenticeships, was supported in a speech at Shuttleworth College, Bedfordshire, by one of the country's leading employers in the environmental services sector.

The event, organised by the Royal Forestry Society, was the second National Forestry, Arboriculture, and Countryside Student Conference and Demo Day attended by 200 delegates involved in full-time, part-time, and recent study, including early career professionals and educationalists.

Tom Williams, Managing Director of Environmental Services provider Maydencroft, which has offices in Hitchin, Windsor and Letchworth, was speaking at the conference held to address the skills gap in the agriculture, arboriculture, landscaping and countryside sectors and gave advice from the employers' perspective.

It was attended by companies in the UK with the common goal of ensuring enough young people of both sexes enter the industry with the right qualifications. He warned of a lack of commitment and diversity in a male-dominated activity.

"There is often a dearth of hands-on skills and personal management experience and team working ethos too. To maximize chances of getting short-listed, past work experience is a definite plus, even if not related to the post – especially if it demonstrates flexibility and up-skills.

"Possible jobs are not always advertised, so do call around. CVs

should be two A4 sides maximum, in a simple format, showing past employment, have a sensible email address, be tailored to the company the young person is submitting to and be laced with buzz words. Follow up a few days later with a polite phone call.

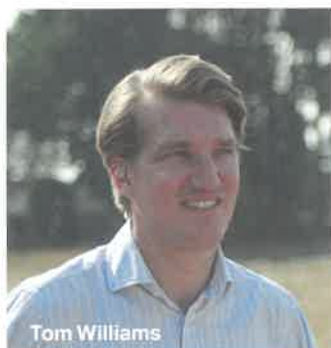
"At interview turn up a few minutes early, display enthusiasm, energy and eagerness, be presentable, show genuine interest in the company, be pro-active, and sell yourself. Take along your certificates and diplomas.

"In your first day in the job, be prompt and presentable, ask questions, show respect to all, be professional, turn off your mobile, be positive, enquire about H & S and above all enjoy it."

Tom Williams could be held up as a role model for aspiring youngsters. A graduate of the University of Reading in Landscape Management his first real job was the assistant to the park manager at Kensington Gardens. Twelve years ago he set up Maydencroft with just three people and now employs over 100 full-time people including many apprentices.

The company manages over 2,500 hectares of woodland, 350 major utility infrastructure sites, has planted over half a million trees and provided its employees with well over 1,000 qualifications.

It creates tailored apprenticeship programmes with local colleges such as Shuttleworth and the BCA and its consultants, working in a variety of fields, are national leaders in their various disciplines. It is responsible for restoring landscapes in some of the UK's most famous historic houses, gardens and estates including the grounds of Welwyn Garden City and Letchworth.

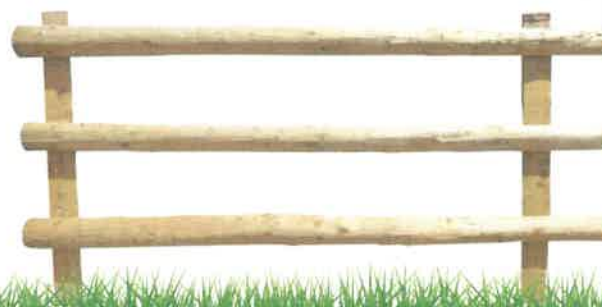


Tom Williams



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